

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 15, 2006. Claims 41 to 55 and 57 to 81 are pending in the application, with Claims 1 to 40 and 56 having been cancelled. Claims 41 to 46, 50 to 55, 58 to 60, 63, 69 to 74, 76 to 79 and 81 have been amended, and Claims 41 and 77 are in independent form. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 41 to 81 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for alleged indefiniteness. In particular, it was alleged that use of the term "or" in Claims 41 and 77 to 79 renders uncertainty to these claims.

The amendments to these claims are seen to address this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 41 to 81 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0143860 (Catan). Claim 56 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter and without conceding the correctness of its rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the remaining claims are respectfully requested.

Claim 41

Referring specifically to the claims, independent Claim 41 as amended is directed to a method of interfacing a plurality of electronic devices that from time to time require maintenance. The method includes the step of transmitting maintenance status information relating to at least one of a current need for maintenance and a potential future need for maintenance from an electronic device to a central server, by at least one of direct communication and communication via at least one intermediary device. The method also

includes the step of, in response to the maintenance status information transmitted from the electronic device, transmitting a message to an entity relevant to the electronic device, that enables the entity to obtain from the central server the maintenance status information about the electronic device. The transmission of the maintenance status information is initiated by at least one of the electronic device and the at least one intermediary device. The message comprises a hypertext link. In addition, the central server comprises a web server which is arranged to respond to the hypertext link being activated, to provide the maintenance status information about the electronic device.

Thus, among its many features, the invention of Claim 41 provides that (i) maintenance status information relating to at least one of a current need for maintenance and a potential future need for maintenance is transmitted from an electronic device to a central server, (ii) a message is transmitted to an entity relevant to the electronic device in response to the maintenance status information transmitted from the electronic device, and (iii) a web server is arranged to respond to a hypertext link of the message being activated, to provide the maintenance status information about the electronic device.

By virtue of the foregoing, in which messages with hypertext links are sent to allow entities to access the maintenance status information about an electronic device, interfacing between electronic devices and multiple entities having different service management systems is seen to be facilitated.

The applied reference of Catan is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the foregoing features.

As understood by Applicants, Catan discloses a system for reading machine-readable label (MRL) devices and searching resources bases, which is responsive

to the context in which the reading took place. The system provides a default mode that supplies options when matching resources cannot be identified from the MRL or other data. See Catan, Abstract; and paragraph 20. An interaction between a reader and a LAN server could be conducted in accord with, and by means of, a client-server process, for example using HDML (handheld device markup language), a markup language for small wireless devices or HTML (hypertext markup language). See Catan, paragraph [0065].

Although Catan may be seen to disclose the use of a hypertext markup language, Catan is not seen to disclose or suggest that a hypertext link is included within a message, which is transmitted to an entity relevant to an electronic device in response to maintenance status information transmitted from the electronic device. Moreover, Catan is not seen to disclose or suggest that activating the hypertext link provides the maintenance status information about the electronic device.

Accordingly, Catan is not seen to disclose or suggest that (i) maintenance status information relating to at least one of a current need for maintenance and a potential future need for maintenance is transmitted from an electronic device to a central server, (ii) a message is transmitted to an entity relevant to the electronic device in response to the maintenance status information transmitted from the electronic device, and (iii) a web server is arranged to respond to a hypertext link of the message being activated, to provide the maintenance status information about the electronic device. In addition, Catan is not seen to disclose or suggest the attendant benefits provided by such features (i) to (iii).

Allowance of Claim 41 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 77

Independent Claim 77 as amended is directed to a method of interfacing a plurality of electronic devices that from time to time require maintenance. The method includes the step of transmitting maintenance status information relating to at least one of a current need for maintenance and a potential future need for maintenance from an electronic device to a central server, by at least one of direct communication and communication via at least one intermediary device. The method also includes the step of, in response to the maintenance status information transmitted from the electronic device, transmitting a message containing information based on the maintenance status information, to an entity relevant to the electronic device, the message comprising a hypertext link. In addition, the method includes the step of providing a web server that has access to at least the maintenance status information about the electronic device, the web server responding to the activation of the hypertext link to provide the maintenance status information.

Thus, among its many features, the invention of Claim 77 provides for (i) transmitting maintenance status information relating to at least one of a current need for maintenance and a potential future need for maintenance from an electronic device to a central server, (ii) transmitting, in response to the maintenance status information transmitted from the electronic device, a message containing information based on the maintenance status information, to an entity relevant to the electronic device, the message comprising a hypertext link, and (iii) providing a web server that has access to at least the maintenance status information about the electronic device, the web server responding to the activation of the hypertext link to provide the maintenance status information.

The applied reference of Catan is not seen to disclose or suggest at least these features, for reasons similar to those discussed above.

Allowance of Claim 77 is therefore respectfully requested.

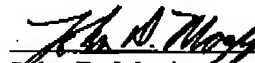
Accordingly, based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, independent Claims 41 and 77 as amended are believed to be allowable over the applied reference.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims and are believed to be allowable over the applied reference for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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